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History of the 51st Signal Battalion



The 51st Signal Battalion was constituted on July 1, 1916 into the Regular Army as the 5th Telegraph Battalion, Signal Corps. The unit was later activated on July 12, 1917 at Monmouth Park, New Jersey. On October 1, 1917, the battalion re-designated as the 55th Telegraph Battalion. Soon thereafter, the battalion deployed to France and joined the American Expeditionary Force. During World War I, the battalion participated in three campaigns – Lorraine 1918, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne.

The battalion returned to New York on June 27, 1919 and moved to Camp Vail, New Jersey. The battalion was re-designated on March 18, 1921, as the 51st Signal Battalion. On August 5, 1925, the battalion returned to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey and would remain there until after World War II.

The 51st Signal Battalion received additional training at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, Camp Blanding, Florida, and Camp Stewart, Georgia prior to deploying for Europe on April 16, 1941. On March 4, 1943, the 51st headed to North Africa and staged and participated in the Invasion of Sicily, followed by a mission to provide communications support to forces arriving in Italy in October 1943. For its service in World War II, the battalion would be credited with five campaigns and receive the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

On March 1, 1945, the unit was reorganized and redesignated as the 51st Operation Signal Battalion. Then again, on September 8, 1950, the unit became known as the 51st Signal Battalion, Corps. During the Korean War, the battalion supported I Corps in ten campaigns and received two Meritorious Unit Commendations and the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation. The battalion remained in Korea after the hostilities as part of Eighth Army. After the Korean War cease fire, the battalion was reorganized and redesignated as the 51st Signal Battalion. The battalion remained in Korea until March 16, 1981 when it moved to Ludwigsburg, Germany in support of VII Corps.

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On November 8, 1990 the battalion was mobilized for immediate deployment to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield. For its participation, the battalion received three campaign streamers. On April 15, 1991, the unit returned to Germany. Three years later, on April 15, 1993, the 51st lowered the American flag for the last time in Germany.

On April 16, 1993, the 51st's Colors were unfurled at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and on October 1, 1993, the unit was re-designated the 51st Signal Battalion (Airborne). The Battalion deployed to Haiti in September 1994 in support of Operation Uphold Democracy, returning in March 1995. In May 2002, a platoon from C Company, 51st Signal Battalion deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, returning in October 2002. In September 2002, B Company sent a platoon in Kuwait returning in August 2003. The 51st Signal Battalion deployed in March 2005 for Operation Iraqi Freedom III, returning to Fort Bragg in March 2006. On September 15, 2006, the 51st Signal Battalion (Airborne) was briefly inactivated.

On January 17, 2007, the 51st Signal Battalion was activated at Fort Lewis, Washington. Soon afterward, the 51st Signal Battalion turned in its Mobile Subscriber Equipment and fielded Joint Network Transport Capability (JNT-C) equipment, transforming it into a modularized Expeditionary Signal Battalion in February 2008. On August 27, 2008, the 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 08-09, returning August 23, 2009.

The unit's distinctive insignia depicts a band of telegraph poles alluding to the unit's original function as the 55th Telegraph Battalion during World War I. The unit's motto is "Semper Constans" meaning "Always Constant."